(b) whether it aims at self-sufficiency in foodgrains;

(c) the other features of the draft policy; and

(d) by when the agriculture policy in final shape is likely to be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Draft Agricultural Policy Resolution is under preparation.

(d) Effort is being made to introduce the draft Agricultural Policy Resolution in the Parliament as early as possible.

Import of edible oil

1218. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether gap between demand and supply of edible oils in the country still continues, if so, how much edible oils is being imported this year;

(b) what quantity of indigenous edible oils is available at present and what steps Government have taken so far for increasing production thereof in the country;

(c) at what price the National Dairy Development Board which is a market intervention agency, has been asked to maintain the market prise of groundnut/mustard oil this year and what is the stock and sale position as per monthly statement of NDDB for last six months; and

(d) what steps Government have taken for moernisation of edible oil industries so far and how long this shortage of essential commodity in this country will continue?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. Import of Edible Oils this year will lalgely depend on the production of edible oil seeds during the ensuing Kharif Crops and availablity of foreign exchange for this purpose.

(b) Based on the estimates of production of oilseeds, availability of indigenous ediible oils is estimated to be the order of 47.22 lakh M.Ts. Government has already adopted a multipronged strategy to increase the production of edible oils which includes, besides others the following:—

(i) Implementation of project like NODP and OPTP providing assistance to oil growing States for critical inputs like improved seeds plant protection irrigation and extension of technology;

(ii) Increase in area under non-traditional oilseeds crops, like soyabean and sunflower and exploitation of oilseeds of tree and forest origin and rice bran etc.;

(iii) intensification of research efforts for increasing productivity of oilseeds;

(iv) better incentives to farmers of through fixation of minimum support prices for edible oilseeds; and

(v) setting up of Technology Mission on oilseeds production;

(c) Under the Market Intervention operation of edible oils, NDDB, acting as its agent is supposed to maintain the prices of groundnut oil and mustard oil within the respective price-bands fixed by the Government which is Rupees 17000-23,000 PMT and Rs. 22000-28000 PMT in respect of mustard and groundnut oil respectively. Considering the highly speculative nature of edible oils and the impact of disclosure in regard to sale and purchase of edible oils under the Market Intervention operation on the success of Operation, it is not considered expedient in the public interest to indicate the quantity of oilseeds and oils purchased and sold by NDDB.

(d) As modernisation measure, a programme of modernisation/modification of huller rice mills through CSIR has already been undertaken to maximise the production of edible grade rice bran oil. The gap between demand and supply of edible oil is to continue until

the production of oilseeds in the country is increased to meet the entire edible oil requirements and self sufficiency in edible oils is likely to take some time.

Compensation to farmers for rise in cost of inputs

1219. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have decided to compensate the farmers for rise in the cost of inputs during the growing season;

(b) whether any concrete proposals have been formulated in this regard; and

(c) what is the extent to which the farmers would be compensated; and by what time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) While the procurement/minimum support prices announced before the sowing season would provide for possible rise in the cost of production likely to occur during the cropping season, the procurement/minimum support prices would be adjusted in case the observed rise in input costs turns out to be higher than the anticipated rise.

(b) and (c) The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices would examine the changes in input costs and recommend adjustments in procurement/minimum support prices, if required, for appropriate consideration.

Report of Dr. Gopal Singh Panel on Minorities

1220. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far in consideration of the report on minorities submitted by Dr. Gopal Singh in 1983;

(b) the level at which it is presently under consideration;

(c) by when the report is expected to be tabled in the Parliament with or without the Action Taken Memorandum; and

(d) the reasons for not accepting the recommendations and for not tabling the report so far?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) to (d) The Report on Minorities submitted by the High Power Panel on Minorities, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other weaker sections headed by Dr. Gopal Singh is expected to be tabled in Parliament during the current session along with an explanatory note and a statement indicating the comments of the Government on the recommendations in the report.

Failure of NDDB in Stabilising Prices of Edible oils

1221. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the main reasons for the failure in stabilising edible oil prices is due to direct purchase of oils from the wholesale merchants, instead of from the farmers;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the farmers could not get remunerative prices for their produce also as a result thereof; and

(c) if so, what remedial measures Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) It is incorrect to say that NDDB has failed to stabilise prices of edible oils. Further it is not true that oil purchases have been made only from wholesale merchants. Under the Market Intervention Operation strategy adopted by NDDB as the Market Intervention Agency is to procure oils directly from the open market and oilseeds thro-